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THE CHURCHMAN

October, 1936.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Charles Simeon Centenary.

THE centenary of the death of Charles Simeon is to be celebrated at Cambridge in November. A Commemoration Service will be held on Friday, November 13, the actual anniversary of his death, in Holy Trinity Church, and a series of commemoration services will be held on the following Sunday, and during the subsequent week. The addresses at these various services will be published in book form by the Lutterworth Press under the title, *Charles Simeon: An Interpretation* (1s. net). We are glad that the centenary of this great Evangelical leader is to be suitably commemorated. It has been noted that Evangelical Churchpeople have only too often in the past failed to do honour to those who have faithfully represented their cause. The life of Simeon was originally written in 1846 by the Rev. William Carus, a Canon Residentiary of Winchester. In 1892 Dr. Handley Moule wrote a *Life* in which he acknowledged his indebtedness to the *Memoirs* of Canon Carus. This volume was published by Methuen & Co. and has been for a long time out of print. They do not contemplate issuing a new edition of Bishop Moule's work, and we are, therefore, glad that Dr. Arthur J. Tait, Residentiary Canon of Peterborough Cathedral, has brought out a brief account of Simeon's Life in view of the coming celebration of the centenary. It is entitled *Charles Simeon and his Trust* and is based on Bishop Moule's *Life*. The Literature Committee of the S.P.C.K. express their pleasure in publishing the book especially as Simeon was blackballed for Membership of the Society between 1820 and 1824. He was, however, subsequently admitted.

The Simeon Trust.

Canon Tait gives a vivid account of Simeon's conversion, of his persecution in his early days as Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge, where he was from 1782 to 1836. He tells of the foundation of the Patronage Trust and as there is so much prejudice in these days it is well to recall the conditions of many parishes in those early days. The Clergy have been described as unashamed pluralists, place-seekers and pleasure-hunters who displayed a spirit anything

but commendable. The Evangelical Clergy of those days were treated with practical barbarity. The Dean of Exeter, in his *Church and People*, tells of Bishop Marsh's theological trap to prevent Evangelicals being admitted to his diocese. He goes on to say: "They were even the victims of popular persecution. Charles Simeon's Church at Cambridge was made the scene of disgraceful rioting. For years they could obtain no preferment, and they propagated their message largely by means of Lectureships founded for afternoon sermons, and in proprietary chapels. Many of the best of them remained unbeneficed nearly all their lives. It was, in fact, this particular manifestation of the dislike which was felt for them which led to the founding of the Simeon Trust. . . . The moral improvement which can be traced in the quality of English life between the latter part of the eighteenth century and 1830 was mainly due to them." It is probably not too much to say that religion in many parts of England during those years of worldliness and stagnation was saved by Charles Simeon, who spent his own fortune very largely in his devotion to his efforts for the spread of the Christian Faith.

The New Catholicism.

Reference has recently been made in several quarters to the misuse of the word "Catholic." It is now frequently used in contrast with the term "Protestant" and even writers who ought to know better give away the title "Catholic" to the narrow and exclusive section of Christians who lay emphasis upon the Apostolical Succession and the peculiar system of religion that is bound up with it. The older English Churchmen used the term in its original sense of universal, and some of them declared that they were more truly Catholic because they were Protestant. The old Vincentian Canon that the Catholic Church must adhere to what has been believed everywhere, always, and by all, was used by such a writer as Bishop Andrewes to defend the Catholicity of the Church of England in his controversy with Bellarmine. It is largely due to the Tractarian movement that the prevalent misuse of the term has developed. This misuse is to be deplored as it gives a false impression when the words "the Catholic Church" are used in the prayer for All sorts and Conditions of Men. We are glad to see that a new conception of Catholicism is developing. It may well be based on Bishop Headlam's statement that "Catholic means universal and those things may claim to be Catholic which have been held with some degree of universality. By a curious aberration of mind the word Catholic is generally employed for what is clearly and definitely not Catholic." The conception of the "New Catholicism" is closely associated with the Declaration of the Lambeth Conference of 1920 which said: "The vision which rises before us is that of a Church genuinely Catholic, loyal to all truth and gathering into its fellowship all who profess and call themselves Christians, within whose visible unity all the treasures of Faith and Order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present shall be possessed in common

and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ." Those who look forward to the reunion of English-speaking Christians throughout the world can help to restore the word "Catholic" to its true meaning by using it only in the sense of this universal teaching which must be the essential feature of the New Catholicism.

William Tyndale.

William Tyndale was martyred at Vilvorde in Belgium on October 6, 1536. The four hundredth anniversary of his martyrdom will be commemorated during the present month. Probably few residents in London are aware that a statue of Tyndale stands in the Thames Embankment Garden. He is represented standing beside a printing-press with the open volume of the New Testament beside him. A tablet in front of the statue has the following record: "William Tyndale, First Translator of the New Testament into English from the Greek. Born A.D. 1484. Died a Martyr at Vilvorde in Belgium A.D. 1536. 'Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.'—'The entrance of Thy Word giveth light' (Psalm cxix. 105, 130). 'And this is the record that God hath given us Eternal Life and this life is in His Son' (1 John v. 11). The last words of William Tyndale were, 'Lord, Open the King of England's eyes.' Within a year afterwards a Bible was placed in every Parish Church by the King's command." On a tablet behind the statue is recorded the names of a number of organisations and institutions which contributed £100 each to the erection of the statue. This is a noble memorial in a prominent position to the memory of one of the great men to whom England owes her heritage of the Open Bible. His life was one of hardship and persecution nobly borne in the prosecution of a great design. One of his biographers says that "Heroic is in truth the appropriate epithet for the character of Tyndale; and heroic in the noblest and highest sense of that somewhat misused word. . . . His simplicity, his earnestness, his noble unselfishness, his love of truth, his independence, his clearness and force of mind, his invincible energy and power—these mark him out as a true hero, one of those great men specially raised up and qualified for a noble work whose lives always constitute a landmark in the annals of human history." Another writer says of him: "It is difficult to exaggerate the greatness of this achievement. Solitary, poor, in exile, exposed to the hostility of the ruling powers, William Tyndale was enabled to confer upon his countrymen a benefit quite incalculable in its blessing." It is fitting that "one of the simplest, noblest, most heroic of human souls" should be commemorated in a land which owes so great a debt to his arduous, lonely and persevering labours.

The World Situation.

The world situation seems to grow more menacing every day. The invasion and overthrow of the Abyssinians by the Italians had scarcely ceased to occupy attention before fresh distractions arose in Palestine and Spain. The conflict between the Jews and the

Arabs has accentuated a bitterness that has been growing ever since the immigration of the Jews into the country assumed such large proportions. A Commission has been appointed to enquire into the problems of Palestine, but we fear it will be a very long time before peace will be restored to that unhappy land. In the meantime the work of Christian missions to both Jew and Arab is being carried on with the greatest difficulty and there is little hope of much progress until the present turmoil has subsided. In Spain the Civil War has developed into a struggle in which no mercy is shown on either side. The revolt against the Government has evidently been long planned and has united the parties represented by the Army, the Royalists, the Fascists and the Roman Catholics. The Republican Party represented by the Government has naturally given the extremists an opportunity of expressing their hatred of the Roman Church and its allies. Communists, anarchists, syndicalists and all the disaffected members of the proletariat, assisted no doubt by a sprinkling of Bolshevists and financial aid from Russia, have come in on the side of the Government probably in the hope of ultimately securing their own aims. The wholesale murders and the burning of churches have shocked the conscience of Europe. No one can say what the future of that unhappy land will be. The small groups of members of the Reformed Church will, we fear, be in a difficult situation. If the Roman Church regains its sway the old persecution will be resumed and if the Communists win there may be a campaign against all religion similar to that which has been carried on in Russia. We can only pray that God will overrule events for the advancement of His Kingdom.

Our Contributors.

Among our contributors this quarter are several whose names are well known to our readers. Bishop Knox makes an original examination of the University life of the medieval period. Dr. Sydney Carter subjects the report of the Rumanian Delegation to a careful scrutiny. Dr. Montgomery Hitchcock deals with the recent work of a Roman Catholic writer on the Reformation Mass and Priesthood. Mr. W. Guy Johnson gives an account of William Tyndale in view of the celebrations of the present month. Dr. Lieselotte Linnhoff is a German writer who has made a special study of Spain when the Reformation Movement was strong there. Some portions of her book have a special appropriateness at the present time.